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**To:** [holly.shrewsbury@state.co.us](mailto:holly.shrewsbury@state.co.us)  
**Subject:** CEA / PEA media release: Pueblo Board Decision on Outside Management for Turnaround Schools Lacks Transparency, Community Engagement  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 1:55:25 PM

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 13, 2019**

**Pueblo Board Decision on Outside Management for Turnaround Schools Lacks Transparency, Community Engagement**

***Educators disappointed; point to chosen company's inexperience, lack of results and controversy***

PUEBLO, Colo. – The Pueblo City Schools Board of Directors approved a contract for MGT to manage Risley International Academy of Innovation and Heroes K-8 Academy in Pueblo, both slated by the state as “turnaround” schools. Educators and parents are disappointed with the lack of transparency and community engagement in the process, and that only one public meeting occurred.

Many are concerned because MGT has had minimal experience managing turnaround schools and the two they have managed resulted in significant controversy in other school districts. Pueblo has already gone to a four-day week for school and will now be spending significant resources for MGT—all with minimal community input.

“Pueblo educators are taken back by the lack of transparency and community engagement in the Board’s process to select MGT. We fail to see the logic in entrusting our students’ future to this national, for-profit company when the community favors bringing on board a company that will consider complementary solutions to efforts already underway, such as the Community Schools work happening at Risley,” said Suzanne Ethredge, president of the Pueblo Education Association.

“MGT has a very limited resume in school turnaround work and has made no visible progress in improving student outcomes in other districts where it was hired. Plus, MGT does not have project managers identified to start the work quickly. The Board should have listened to these serious concerns of its constituents and educators before rushing to this conclusion,” Ethredge added.

“All across Colorado educators have been rising up against a chronic lack of resources that hurts our students and a lack of respect for students and teachers,” said Amie Baca-Oehlert, high school counselor and president of the Colorado Education Association. “The very educators who teach in these classrooms, and the parents whose students attend these schools, were never meaningfully consulted.

The whole process lacked authentic community engagement, which we find profoundly disrespectful. Pueblo educators went on strike last year to protest just these kinds of poor school conditions and inadequate funding.”

The State Board of Education will decide whether or not to approve the Pueblo Board's decision, giving hope that more transparency and community engagement will be a part of the state process prior to a final decision being reached.

**About MGT:** MGT is relatively new to turnaround work with most of their experience studying issues, not implementing education policies. Its direction of turnaround efforts [in Gary, Indiana](#) and DeSoto County, Florida have not provided any indication that hiring the company yielded positive results or led to improve student outcomes. The achievements MGT cited in its application to become the EMO in Adams County School District 14 could not be corroborated and MGT was not selected by the school board in Commerce City. Further, the selection of MGT caused [significant controversy in Gary](#) because Indiana’s superintendent of public instruction, Tony Bennett, was on the MGT board and therefore stood to gain financially from MGT’s contract.

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Friday, April 27, 2018

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5:00 AM		
6:00 AM		
7:00 AM		
8:00 AM		
9:00 AM		
	9:45 AM - 10:00 AM CEA Meeting Prep Governor's Office	
10:00 AM	10:00 AM - 10:30 AM TAB 1 Meeting with Teachers and CEA (Staff: Pat, Kurt, Marie) Governor's Office	
11:00 AM	11:00 AM - 11:30 AM HOLD: Gov Speak at Teacher Rally (Staff: Conor) Civic Center, Denver, CO, USA	
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